

OHS Director - Economic Mobility Campaign

Dr. Blanca Enriquez: Greetings, I am Dr. Blanca Enriquez, director of Head Start in Washington, DC. Thank you for taking a short moment to join me today as we engaged in talking about the importance of our work with parents.

The relationship between a parent and a child is the most pure and selfless love anyone can experience. And I firmly believe that all parents to the best that they can with what they have to manifest that love. It is the "what they have" part of the statement I wish to address today.

So I invite you to join us in maximizing our efforts to help families with "what they have" in pursuit of their educational, vocational and career goals. Right from the very beginning the founders of Head Start understood the power of this family-child relationship and the importance of a financially stable and healthy home environment. That is why we are considered a successful two-generation program.

As you and I work for Head Start, we support the noble mission of helping families move out of poverty and we should be very proud of that. Many of the original goals that led to the formation of Head Start identified services, learning activities and educational opportunities for both children and their family. Since then, we created programs that support the whole child, including making an effort to improve their home situation.

We have partnered with the family and provided individualized assistance such as education, jobs and/or counseling. To guide this work with families, the Office of Head Start developed the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework.

Today, I am excited to announce a week of events that focus on family wellbeing. As we work towards this outcome, we are helping ensure that families are safe, healthy and have financial security. Supporting families' financial security and economic wellbeing is not new to our work. Join us as we learn from experts about what works and how to continue improving our services.

We have three webinars for you with topics covering research or evidence-based knowledge, sharing of information on best practices, and resources that help set families on a course for accomplishing their goals. In addition, a fourth webinar provides opportunities for professional networking with peers.

We know what is good for the family is ultimately good for the children, and that is why we are here. Our responsibility is to lay the groundwork of success for our children and families both now and for the future. It is with your help that our children enter schools ready to learn and to thrive.

And so I thank you so much for taking the time to capitalize on this opportunity and for participating in our webinars. Through continued partnering, we are achieving our goal of setting children and families on a path towards success.